



The Last Supper by Bouveret, 19th century

The New Covenant That All Would Not Receive

by

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The Wondrous Truths of What Happened When Jesus Died & Rose

The New Covenant that many Could Not Receive

The house of God and the work of God in the world, begins with Covenant. In its simplest form, a covenant is an agreement or contractual arrangement, agreed to by both parties, which is binding, and sometimes irreversible. When God gives his word to man, and draws him into a covenant by his promises and commands, man is bound to the covenant. The idea of a covenant today is not well taken: we regularly break contracts without a thought; we annul and divorce marriages, leave jobs before the end of a term, renege on mortgages, loans, and a variety of other agreements, in short we take very lightly the seriousness of a covenant. God on the other hand, stresses over and over in his word the sober nature of Covenant, and what the breaking of a covenant can do.

Exodus 19:5 Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine

The keeping of Covenant brings blessing, and the breaking of covenant brings judgment:

And if ye shall despise my statutes, or if your soul abhor my judgments, so that ye will not do all my commandments, but that ye break my covenant: I also will do this unto you; I will even appoint over you terror, consumption, and the burning ague, that shall consume the eyes, and cause sorrow of heart: and ye shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it.

Leviticus...

it is true even when a person disavows the covenant later and the effect is clearly seen in more mundane covenants such as marriage. Even when two people get divorced, the effect of the first

covenant bears on the rest of their lives, and effects any future covenant of that nature that they make. Those who have entered remarriages will tell you that even when a divorce is amicable, or when the former spouse moves far away, the fact of the marriage and the former spouse forever bear on the new marriage, on the children and family life in general: even when the partner is no longer there, their presence continues to be felt whether good or bad: covenants have an effect even when they are not honored.

The Bible is sometimes referred to as the Old Testament and New Testament, but is also referred to in some renderings as the Old Covenant and New Covenant. In some ways, this is difficult language, but the use of the word 'Testament' is referring to covenant: it is the written seal of covenants made between God and Man. It is the contract in writing. A will and Testament is a written account of what a person who dies bequeaths to the next generation: upon the death of the 'testator' or one who writes and leaves the testament, the effects of the Testament are put into force. In the New and Old Covenant or Testament, it is a living and continuing contract and agreement between God and Man, with God being the one who writes the Covenant. Even when one does not care for what the Bible or the Commandments say, the effect is still there: for example, many scoff at dietary laws in the Old testament, but the effect of eating unclean foods carries a real consequence. The effect of the covenant abides even in unbelief, since man is dependent upon belief, but God is not. The Old Testament word for covenant is "B'rit", or

ברית.

The word 'B rit' is translated as covenant 264 times according to Gesenius [BLB] as covenant, with 'league' following at 17 and the only other seldom mentioned renderings of the word are . A covenant, according to Gesenius, in the Oriental and Hebrew culture comes from the root of the word meaning to 'cut' and so we speak about "cutting a covenant" and the cutting comes from the idea of passing through two sides of a victim, though the more usual manifestation of it was in sharing a meal, which would have taken place at a dinner sharing game, or in the instance of the mention of a covenant of 'salt', which is evidence of the affirmation of a covenant. The Abrahamic covenant for the seed and land, shows an example of this 'cutting of the covenant', as the sacrifice is laid on either side:

And he took unto him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another: but the birds divided he not. Gen 15:10

As Jesus sits at dinner with his disciples, they are sharing the Passover, the dinner is a Seder dinner which is shared in commemoration of the flight from Egypt into the Wilderness, and both the bitterness of the Journey and the great deliverance of God. Jesus though is about to explain the last major doctrine or teaching of his ministry to his disciples, which is the blood covenant, manifested in the taking of the wine and bread, and his startling and bold statement that they are to 'take and eat' or take and drink' is a truth too obscure at the moment, and previously, has caused even some of his heartiest followers to turn away. The first time the idea of 'eating his body and drinking his blood comes up, is not in the upper room but in the Synagogue! He explains the meaning of the passage but the end is as follows:

From that [time] many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. Jn 6:66

Long before the Last Supper, though, what was Jesus' explanation of this passage? For centuries, unbelievers have had more trouble with this passage than any other in the New Testament, and it does seem to separate "the men from the boys". Before he had taught in parables of the Kingdom of God, and of loving thy neighbor as thyself, and God above all else: he had healed every sickness, and confronted every foe, and though the best of 'scholars' and the Sanhedrin had tried to trap him in his speech or doctrine, they could not: he was from above, from heaven, and the Word clearly teaches that he was 'with God, and was God' (John 1) Even when he spoke of the incarnation, and the forthcoming resurrection, the most trouble they had was in a lack of understanding, but here is a brash command, like no other in his ministry, coming from the pulpit of the Synagogue at Capernaum:

Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. Jn 6:54

What then is the explanation, here as early as the sixth chapter of John? Why would he present so remarkable a statement? The eating and drinking of substance and fluids of the human body, if this was the meaning, would have condemned to hell, it was an unclean act so unclean, it was not worthy of mention among the list of unclean foods: and yet here, he is telling them that who would eat his flesh and drink his blood, has eternal life and will be raised up. The beginning of the teaching starts here, before the Last Seder. Jesus teaches that his body is 'meat indeed' and

his blood 'drink indeed (John 6 :55); but it is the next passage that shows for the first time what he is speaking of: the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Jesus Christ:

He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him Jn 6:56

'Eat' is the Greek word, 'phago' and is a literal rendering, but just as we use the word in more than one way, it can also mean to consume or completely devour. Silly little sayings such as "I could just eat you up" do not infer cannibalism, but the intense desire to be a part of the person or at one with the person. Jesus was teaching the Jews that he was to be taken literally and seriously as their promised King and Messiah: they were to immerse, devour, taken in and thoroughly consume his words, his teachings, his parables, his gifts, to walk fully into eternal life. The passage earlier, refers to who will be raised up, who will be given eternal life. That is the main message of this sermon in Capernaum. Jesus explains that as he is in the Father and the Father in him [the teaching of the 'oneness' of the Father and the Son] totally one, immersed, one in one, he is calling his followers to do the same. The great Mediator, the one Mediator between man and God, calls us to oneness, immersion, and indwelling:

As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. Jn 6:57

Does this idea have any base in the Old Testament or Torah? Many Jews would argue that this was a first, and they probably find this saying of Jesus one of the more offensive: indeed many Christians today readily go along with 'communion' but never really understand it: surprising to many though, is the message that this really is a Jewish, Old Testament-Torah teaching, which foreshadows the sacrifice which Yshua, Jesus was about to make. S. Best-Ebster pointed this passage out to me once, and I was surprised that it was not more frequently taught:

And the remainder thereof shall Aaron and his sons eat: with unleavened bread shall it be eaten in the holy place; in the court of the tabernacle of the congregation they shall eat it. Lev 6:16

The command is about the handling of the Meat Offering, but the meat offering is not in this sense 'beef' but an offering of bread. The passage in John 6 is Jesus' sermon on the Bread of Life.

The priests, and high priest were required to 'take in' or eat the meat offering, properly anointed, and the foreshadowing of the Bread Of Heaven in the Old Testament is clearly seen, in the preparation of the Wheat harvest, the sacrifice of the meat offering, and the Manna from Heaven which sustained Israel in the Wilderness, keeping them alive when they would otherwise have starved. The Manna, or 'Bread from Heaven' was provided by God, And was life to Israel, and Jesus points this out in his sermon:

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.

I am that bread of Life. John 6:47-8

The bread of life is a bible study unto itself which could be covered in volumes, since it is represented in whole or part in every mention of 'bread' in the Bible, including Wheat and harvest, grain, manna, the showbread of the Temple and the countless examples within the Messianic types and shadows which point to the 'living bread' which gives eternal life. When Jesus instructs 'Take all of ye and eat' it is very clear that the act was not unusual nor odd, though "many could not receive it". What evidence do we have on the very face of the thing that Jesus was not speaking literally (and yet at the same time he was for those who understood) about any unnatural act such as imbibing in human flesh? The thought was unspeakable, so the first evidence is that the disciples clearly understood that He was speaking in the Spirit. The second is, a mere point of logic that hardly needs to be pointed out, that he in no way was inviting them to cannibalism at the last Supper!!! Yet at the same time, this was the Lamb for sacrifice that was to be taken and eaten! The primary evidence is that he had still not gone to the Cross!! The Passover lamb was being dedicated, but the sacrifice had not yet occurred, so he had to be speaking figuratively, in the Holy Spirit.

There are some churches who for centuries have argued that the literal body and blood of Jesus becomes 'transfigured' in a wafer or host and is "taken in". This is simply a foolish approach and does not show wisdom in the Torah. The practice of taking in a food 'imbued' with a persona does not come Judaeo-Christian practice but from cults such as those who worshipped Ashtoreth, or a Sun God. The round circled bread, formed into tiny 'suns' were held up to the sun for light, then ingested with the belief that one 'took in the Sun' and its power and light. Jesus though, is teaching a literal truth, figuratively.

In Chapter 6 of the Gospel of John, Jesus is teaching about himself being the 'bread of heaven' sent down from above. Bread feeds and nourishes people. The 'meat' offering (so called because meals were referred to as 'meat' when the Bible was translated), was baked or fried bread with frankincense on it: it was the nourishment and sustaining life, with a kingly scent, given from above by God. The 'taking in' refers to the total immersion and assimilation of Christ through the Holy Spirit or in short, all things Christ. The commandment of baptism reinforces this: we show publicly that we go under water to show that we are immersed in Christ, in the Holy Spirit in God: when we eat food, we 'take in' what keeps us alive, but it does not stay with us. Christ stays with us. We 'eat his body' and 'drink his blood' not in some odd ritualistic event, and yet not merely just some loose symbol, but in a command, to "do this in remembrance of me". He is leaving the apostles with a prophetic similitude that for all time, the followers of Christ will carry on his name, his work, but more than that, his presence and indwelling Holy Spirit, by 'taking him in'. This is more than just some candle lighting service of momentary remembrance. This is a commanded act of love and obedience, and every time we participate in what we call 'communion' we are drawing into communion with him, and continuing the fulfillment of the prophetic expression.

At the same time, because it is the one thing he asks that we do every time we draw together in worship ('as often as you do this'), we are declaring the Lord's death and resurrection, his life, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, eternal life, and the 'new man'. We are not 'ingesting God' but we are receiving communion with Him, in the way he asked to be remembered, and we show to a dying world in that one act, the entirety of the Gospel. We are also saying "I believe".

Confirming his Word, professing his Word, remembering him, and obeying Him, we draw into obedience in worship. We consent to his truth, his way and his life. The apostles were Jewish: they understood what he was saying: by the time of the 'Last Seder', the Levitical priesthood had handled sacrifices in this way for three thousand years. They ate the bread of the meat offering! It was commanded that the living bread be 'taken in' by the priests. This issue of the 'living bread' was so critical that it was one of the things put in the Ark of the Covenant :

...Which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein [was] the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant. Hebrews 9:4

The living bread was inside the Ark of the Covenant, pointing to its internal location, 'dwelling in' the Ark, along with the budding rod of Aaron, 'life from death' indicating resurrection. Of course we 'take in' the living bread of heaven: He indwells us!. I have heard people say that the word 'indwelling' is not in the Bible. How about 'dwelling in' or 'abide'-in, with, etc., One also notes the well known passage:

To whom God would make known what [is] the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: Colossians 1:27

This is the Cup of My Blood

We receive, we invite in, we immerse, walk in, walk with, we infuse our whole being in Christ, in the Messiah. Here is the message of the living bread, that we "Take and Eat". The blood covenant as mentioned before is the taking in of Life: the Old Testament teaches that Only be sure that thou eat not the blood: for the blood [is] the life; and thou mayest not eat the life with the flesh. Deuteronomy 12:23 (See also: Gen 9:4-5; Leviticus 17:11,14 and many others)

Jesus is not speaking in the manner of 'blood cults': he is speaking of life. The body cannot live without blood or breath. The Messiah gives both. Blood is precious and life abides in it, so the taking in of wine, with the admonition that

For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. Mt 26:28

Jesus, the rabbi named 'Salvation' or 'He Saves' is telling his disciples that the blood of the New Testament is for the remission of sins once offered! The Jews sitting at the Seder understood clearly he was referring to himself as the Passover Lamb, the Lamb of God, and though they might not have understood in fullness the extent of the sacrifice for eternal forgiveness and remission of sins, there were none sitting at the table who considered for a moment that Jesus was suggesting the ingestion of human blood. This act was actual and prophetic, a similitude and fact, for the actual blood and body of the Savior had to be offered, and had to be received and 'taken in' by a nation of priests. We most certainly do this in remembrance of the Lord and Savior being real and present, and of the act he accomplished on the Cross which none other

living could have ever accomplished. We were not of the right stuff. He was offering us a way to become of “the right stuff”, or “partakers of the divine nature”.

Consider again what Yshua said in the passage in John 6:

Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. John 6:53-4

Did Judas understand? It is not clearly described in the Gospels, but it appears that he had a partial understanding, but not enough such that he did not betray his friend and that for money. He also seems though to have almost immediately after ‘Satan entered into him’ realized the enormity of his crime which drove him to insanity and suicide. He acknowledges that he has betrayed innocent blood, but he does not seem to offer true repentance.

What was understood pre-Pentecost and post-Pentecost is not neatly discussed in the scriptures but it is clear that Jesus in the apostles’ pre-Pentecost state, trusted that they would understand him. No doubt some that heard the command to eat and drink, who did not have spiritual depth or understanding, in their own minds were justified when they said that they could not receive it. In John 6:41 the Jews ‘murmur’ because he says he is the Bread of Heaven, though he has miraculously from a few loaves fed thousands. He says “*I am the bread of life*” and the Jews say, “*This is a hard saying, who can hear it*”.

Manna, though, was also a miraculous supernatural event. After 40 years of being fed from above in the wilderness of Sin, nonetheless by the end, the Children of Israel’s belief was so small, that the first generation from Egypt who had turned to idolatry. Because of lack of faith, they died in the desert, having seen so many miracles such as the pillar of cloud and fire, water from the rock, the waters of Marah turned sweet, the raining of quail, and the most spectacular and overlooked event: 70 elders witnessing the appearance of Messiah on the Sapphire stone, yet the nation of Israel was still wishing to trust the natural rather than the Lord. Jesus rebukes them centuries later for their unbelief, but remarks that only those to whom it is given will believe, only those who have a heart after God and the truth, though ‘*whosoever will*’ still holds. Many say they cannot hear this idea that by faith, the blood, the body, the bread of life, and eternal life are

found all in one person(hood), the incarnate Messiah. In John 6:60 they say:

Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard [this], said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it?

and in 6:66

From that [time] many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.

When Jesus turns to his own disciples and asks if they will turn away also, they reply that he alone has the words of eternal life, and that there is no other one nor way.

Jesus was sent as an ensign of belief, not of carnal human reasoning. He asks us to believe supernatural things in a natural world and condition. The issue is faith, the leap of faith, away from human reason, but not away from divine reason. The disciples partake of the bread of life at this last Seder dinner, trying with their “little faiths” to understand the great issues of belief in order to see “the mighty works of God.” (John 6:28.)

The Communion of the mighty works of God, of the Love of God, means suspending our ordinary understanding, and entering into to a ‘mighty understanding’ to all who believe, of the mighty works of God. We are warned never to take lightly this command:

For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. 1 Cor 11:29

We are certainly to discern the very literal ‘Lord’s Body’ but in the way that he explains in John 6 and at the Last Seder. How lightly we take that commandment today, and how quickly we decide we cannot receive these ‘hard words’. We literally partake of the body and blood in the taking in of his presence and life giving, and eternal sacrifice, which figuratively refers to the ‘taking in’ of his very real presence in the ‘*parakletos*’, comforter, Holy Spirit of God which is the indwelling of Christ, the Messiah of Israel. His testimony in the last pages of the Bible in Revelation is referred to as the spirit of prophecy, the testimony of Jesus Christ:. We immerse in Him, love him and in him, we walk in him, he abides in us, he indwells us in the Holy Spirit, we partake of the divine

nature, and we are saved.

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